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## **Senate Approves More for Jobless**

### *Senate Majority Takes Advantage of Federal Money for Unemployed*

LANSING – The state Senate today approved legislation that would allow workers to continue getting unemployment payments while looking for a job, said Senator Beverly Hammerstrom (R-Temperance). The legislation, House Bill 4945, is currently awaiting the Governor's signature.

"This is a positive step forward in recognizing that Michigan's families are struggling when one or both parents are out of work," said Hammerstrom. "Our families and our neighbors deserve our collective support when the economy is still in the process of recovery and job searches are longer than expected."

On May 28, 2003, President George W. Bush signed legislation allowing for the continuation of the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) program, which provides up to 13 weeks of federally funded jobless benefits to workers who exhaust all of their state unemployment benefits. The TEUC had been scheduled to end on May 31, 2003, but the new legislation continues the program until the end of December 2003. Jobless workers must claim their first week of TEUC by December 27, 2003, in order to receive their full entitlement.

The Bureau of Workers and Unemployment Compensation (BWUC), which administers the state's UI system, estimates that the legislation would provide \$206 million to an approximately 53,000 long-term unemployed workers in the state.

To qualify for the temporary extended benefits under HB 4945 (H-2), unemployed workers must:

- Have exhausted their state benefits;
- Have received their last unemployment check for the week ending on, or after, May 24, 2003; and
- Submit an application for extended benefits with the BWUC.

"It is important that, as the economy continues to recover, we help those who want to work and provide for their families," Hammerstrom said.